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ABSTRACT

This document summarizes discussions at an invitational workshop on youth development in Nigeria. Youth were defined as those between 18 and 40 years of age, with those who were between 30 and 40 years old considered to be "mature youth." The following broad issues were discussed: (1) the characteristics of youth, including their idealism and need for role models; (2) the negative effects of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), which has reduced the resources and opportunities available to youth; (3) the importance of the family and adult role models in the socialization process and the need to provide programs that continue and develop that process; (4) the importance of education as the major socialization agency and the poor quality of higher education; (5) the need for youth to involve themselves in the political process; (6) the dangers of growing religious fanaticism and intolerance on university campuses; (7) the need to emphasize the value of physical labor as well as academic pursuits; (8) the need to promote and develop creativity; and (9) the need to develop high moral standards among youth leaders. A list of participants and a description of the Africa Leadership Forum are appended. (FMW)

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AFRICA LEADERSHIP FORUM

FARM HOUSE DIALOGUE

Youth and Development

Dialogue 3

24 - 26 February 1989

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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FARM HOUSE DIALOGUE - PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

The Dialogue is neither a political gathering nor is it a gathering to chastise and condemn. It is basically a brainstorming event. Everyone is at liberty to freely express his or her opinions.

It is a concerned attempt to search for solutions to national problems through discussion. It does not seek to delve into who brought about particular predicament of the nation. Although a knowledge of how the nation got to a specific impasse or difficult situation might provide useful lessons for the future.

It, instead, is an attempt to engage in a proper analysis of national problems and arrive through discussions and dialogue at practical suggestions and recommendations which may help in resolving all or part of these problems.

In consequence, the Dialogue places great emphasis on the selection of individuals to participate in the discussions, noting the importance of inviting always personalities who have knowledge and insights into the particular national issues being discussed and who can make substantial contributions.

It is aimed not always to reach consensus but to provide opportunity for recording honest disagreements on vital national issues.

Each Dialogue will result in a publication that will capture the essence of the discussion and the main conclusions reached.

YOUTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Chairman: Chief Osita Okeke
Rapporteur: Dr. Femi Badejo
Editor: Professor Akin. Mabogunje

Introduction

The third Farm House Dialogue on the topic "Youth and Development" took place at the Obasanjo Farms Nigeria Ltd at Otta,. on February 24 - 26, 1989. The Chairman for the Dialogue was Chief Osita Okeke who was a frontline student union leader at the time of the political independence of the country. He is currently the President of the University of Ibadan Alumni Association and a member of the Governing Council of the University of Ibadan. Despite the wide invitation that was meant to cover the gender, geographical and occupational mix that make up Nigeria, nineteen people actually participated in the Dialogue with just one lady. The list of participants is presented as Annexure I to this report.

The Dialogue took off with a welcome address by General Obasanjo. The idea of a welcome address, the General pointed out, was a departure from previous practice. He felt such an address was necessary given the importance of this particular Dialogue. In the address, he cautioned against turning the Dialogue into a recriminational exercise on what the past generations have done wrong or have failed to do. Instead, the mix of participants should aim at distilling out of our national experience so far philosophies and ideals that must shape the future of our youths. This, according to him, is not to obliterate the past, but to induce us to pick the best out of it as

foundation for a greater future. General Obasanjo also emphasized the relevance of examining the common strands in the value systems of different cultural groups in Nigerian for any discussion of Youth and Development. He concluded by expressing the hope that Nigerian youths will see the challenge before them as one of achieving the full release of human energy for the democratization of the political, economic and social processes in Nigeria, for the integration and development of the country, and for the discipline, prosperity and contentment of all its citizens.

The Chairman of the Dialogue also gave a formal address. He started by recounting how, as President of the National Union of Nigerian Students (NUNS) in the period soon after our national independence, he succeeded, in cooperation with other forces in society, in getting the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact abrogated. However, in an attempt to get the same forces to protest the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, he ended up in the Creek hospital as a result of Police brutality. More importantly, he recounted how on that occasion a Minister of State who was receiving treatment in the same hospital came to caution him and ended by stating that "it is better to LIVE for your country than to die for it." The episode left him wondering what most Nigerians think is meant by PATRIOTISM.

These events of twenty-eight years ago are important and related to the mind shattering experiences of youths today. He noted that there is a general youth crisis around the world today and that there is an absence of well articulated programmes and policies geared towards fostering the growth of the positive innate zeal and creativity in youths in order to consciously improve society. He cautioned against a view of youths that sees them as people to be kept out

rather than involved in the various processes of society. He also lamented the lack of appropriate values in society to guide and fortify our youths.

The two addresses provided a useful background to subsequent discussions which participants agreed to structure around the following nine broad issues:

(i) Characterization of the Nigerian Youth.
(ii) Resource allocation in Nigeria as it affects Youths.
(iii) Socialization process and the Youth.
(iv) Values and value system.
(v) Education and the Nigerian Youth.
(vi) Youth and the Political process.
(vii) Youth and the work process.
(viii) Youth and creativity.
(ix) Youth and Leadership.

I. CHARACTERIZATION OF THE NIGERIAN YOUTH

The Dialogue resolved to regard as youths all those who fall between the ages 18 to 40. It recognizes, however, that this is for convenience since it does not really typify a group. It is possible for some 15 year olds to qualify as youths whilst it is not unusual to find a 45 year old with the spirit and attitude of a youth. This broad spectrum, it was observed, can be further divided into two categories: those within the age bracket 18 to 30 years and those between 30 and 40 years who should be seen as mature youths.

Having resolved the question of age, youths were characterized as people likely to show the following traits:

a strong desire to move up the social ladder; a tendency to be idealistic as a result of the values passed unto them at earlier ages by role models in society; an eagerness to live up to these models; frequent frustrations and anxieties as these idealism confronts the cold realism of daily existence. Youths are thus people still worrying about what they will be in life and not those wanting to keep what they have. They are concerned not only about mundane things, but also about how to change society as a whole a trait which in some youths attain revolutionary proportions. Youths, especially when they are not in the mature category, are also people who are materially dependent and to some extent need adult supervision. They are exuberant and dynamic. They want quick results and desire that everything be accomplished in a day. They are risk-takers because of their limited level of responsibilities. They also tend to be relatively alienated from the status-quo. They are mobile in thought and have a world view that is in transition.

II. RESOURCE ALLOCATION IN NIGERIA AND THE YOUTH

Participants agreed to place the question of youth and development within the context of the structural adjustment programme (SAP) and observed that the recent contraction of the national resource base and opportunity which this programme has created has meant that enough resources are not available for commitment to youth development.

The Dialogue observed that the gross inadequacy of resources has seriously impaired and incapacitated the ability of youths to realize their full potentialities. The gross inadequacy is manifest in a variety of ways including the

marginalization of educational institutions at all levels, the contraction of employment opportunities, and the poor standards of recreational facilities.

The effect of this inadequacy would not have been so telling but for the absence of a formal youth development policy on the part of the government. Noting that the youth, as defined earlier on, constitute a significant proportion of the nation's population, the major percentage of the population, the Dialogue then called for an articulate and imaginative youth policy for development.

III. SOCIALIZATION

The Dialogue noted that the socialization process for youths usually begins at home. Just as at that level, there is need for a father-figure or mother-figure, at the national level, youths usually feel at a loss without an hero that they can identify with and after whom they can pattern their lives. This tends to structure their dreams and aspirations and influences their response to the socialization process. Such models provide the youths with tangible image of societal leaders which they can strive to emulate.

In the opinion of participants, even as children, youths tend to identify with several aspects of adult life depending on their temperament. Most children, it was noted, tend to identify with adults of strong character, who are disciplined, successful, mentally alert and organized and generally protective. Such identification structures their world view and enables them to carve out a future role for themselves in the larger society. Participants

observed that parents and guardians owe it to their children and wards to provide them with role models by leading exemplary life styles. To effectively do this, they must ensure a high degree of stability in their family life. Family stability can be better aided at home if certain aspects of the Nigerian culture is not de-emphasized. On this basis it was recommended that breast feeding for a longer period than the present practice is needed if the child is to develop a stronger sense of attachment to the parents. It was also recommended that the positive aspects of the extended family system should be sustained, especially those aspects which help to restrain divorce among married couples and thus to reduce instability of family life.

Outside the family, concern was expressed for the need to work towards the establishment of a national socialization process. This entails that government must provide ample funds for creating institutions, organizations and activity programmes outside of the formal school system. All of these must be directed at achieving intensified and more structured inter personal interactions among all categories of Nigerian youths with a view to enhancing national integration and fostering the evolution of a national culture. One way of doing this is the organisation of youth hostels and holiday camps throughout the country.

This would also involve the improvement of the mass transit system and perhaps subsidising fares as used to happen in pre-independence days on the railways. Youth hostels and holiday camps can serve the vital role of inculcating in our youths some basic and desirable national ethos such as hard work, a sense of public service, respect for elders and for one's peers, moral integrity and pride in our culture and value system. Until such youth hostels and holidays are available, it was suggested that universities can be encouraged to

use their facilities for such a purpose during holidays. To provide universities with the necessary incentives to do this, the federal and state ministries of youth should provide funds for this purpose and actively participate in ensuring that youths get to see other parts of the country and meet their peers. Recreational facilities should also be provided locally to help in mental and physical relaxation and enhance the creativity of the youths.

In the same vein, the Dialogue also recommended the establishment of national and less elitists equivalents of such youth clubs as the Jaycees, Rotaracts and the Lcos with basically Nigerian orientation and ethos. It was suggested that such clubs should not entirely be sponsored by the government but would need some subvention and official recognition.

The Dialogue also observed the insufficient attention the Nigerian media pay to youth affairs. On national and state television, for instance, besides the few children programmes and musicals such as Soul Train and Quiz programmes, there is nothing concrete for the youth to relate to. It was recommended that the media need to consciously develop programmes that can aid youth development and pay less attention to the foreign disco and canned serialized American films.

To bridge the communication gap between the elders and the youths, it was suggested that Nigerian elders be more tolerant of the youths. Most Nigerian cultures, in fact, do recognize the rights of youths to be heard and to actively contribute to discussions on vital societal issues. Pains should be taken at the personal level to explain the basis of decisions to the youth. At the same time youths are advised to be less impatient and be more willing to learn from the wisdom of their elders.

IV. EDUCATION

Although the second Farm House Dialogue had focused on the topic: Education for Development, it was felt that there was the need to re-examine this issue from the point of view of the youths themselves. This entails looking at education as socializing process and examining the special problems of students. It was agreed that education is a major agency in the socialization of youths. As such, when the younger generation tends to be more deviant the indication is that something is wrong within the educational system. Education must therefore be made socially relevant. The present educational system, it was observed, has failed to serve as a means of transmitting the main ingredients of our culture to the younger generation. The cause of this is that the formal school system has tended to bleach out the tangible elements of culture because most of what is taught and done in the schools do not arise from the bosom of our society. Yet, true education is a means for equipping the individual to relate more effectively to his environment. In Nigeria, however, it can be said that presently, formal education marginalises the knowledge of our traditions and the present deterioration in our university system would affect adversely the preparation of the children for the technological age.

The Dialogue noted that an overemphasis on paper qualification by the society has led to a craze for admission into tertiary institutions. As a result the number of students seeking admission into these institutions far outstrips the spaces available for them and many of those in our universities are not necessarily university materials.

The issue of women education was also considered. The consensus was that if the preferential treatment of quota system being advocated in some quarters specially for women were to be deemphasized, it should be women's natural brilliance and academic competence to emerge more clearly. It was generally agreed that women are not academically inferior to their men counterparts.

The centralization of the admission process also came in for mentioning. In the opinion of participants admission into the university should be decentralized to allow for relatively easier access to the Universities by those academically competent and eligible.

Within the University system the plight of lecturers was examined. The consensus of opinion was that the lot of University teachers is a poor one compared to what obtained in the past. Their low productivity today as well as the moral laxity within the community might well be the outcome of such demoralizing situation. However, it was pointed out that if the plight of University teachers is poor, that of teachers at lower levels of the educational ladder is very poor indeed. If Nigeria must improve on its formal socialising process for the youths, the present trend will need to be drastically reversed.

Of equal importance is the need at the primary and secondary school levels to provide the youths with proper guidance and counselling service to help them realize that admission to tertiary institutions or the securing of certificates is not the most important thing in life. Parents must also be advised to put less pressure on their children by forcing them into professions that they as parents see as the only marks of success.

Education needs to be made more socially relevant by emphasizing the productive aspect of

knowledge. Participants were of the opinion that education should be an instrument for preparing youths to face the realities of existence. As such everyone should be made to realize that he is a potential employer of his or other people's labour. One of the goals of education should therefore be the stimulation of the students' imagination, initiative and creativity. This is the only way that youths can be prepared for national development.

As regards the problems of students, it was noted that these have changed considerably from what they used to be in the past. The Dialogue categorized them into four:

(i) Academic
(ii) Welfare
(iii) Social
(iv) General.

On the academic problems of students, the need for some form of democratization was highlighted. It was suggested, for instance, that students could be involved in academic planning and encouraged to make useful inputs into the development of academic curricula. It was agreed after a long debate that there was really nothing harmful in students' representatives being invited to be members of curriculum committees at the tertiary level.

In regard to students' welfare, it was noted that the era of government subsidy for food and other amenities is gone for good. Privatisation of hostel accommodation may be worth considering. Given the present situation of structural adjustment and the need to reduce the level of social expenditure, students would need to take a hand in the provision and maintenance of welfare facilities. Cooking facilities lying idle in universities can be reactivated by the students to prepare their own meals on a collective basis,

thereby reducing exploitation by food vendors. Work-study programmes of various types can be introduced into our universities not only to provide source of pocket-money for some students but also to help poorer ones complete their courses. Such programmes will also serve to inculcate responsible work ethic in most students.

On the social problems confronting the students, the dialogue noted the inadequate recreational facilities available to them. This is bound to have a negative effect on the development of the imaginative and creative capabilities of students. This inadequacy has tended to turn the majority of students into what are called "triangular students", that is, students whose daily existence is simply one of a shuttle between lecture room, cafeteria and hostels. This creates for most students, a state of constant tension and leaves them bottled up with numerous frustrations. This may even explain some of the unnecessary riots on our campuses. As such, educational authorities need to pay more attention to the provision of adequate recreational facilities on the campuses of our tertiary institutions to aid interpersonal interaction among students and help in relieving unnecessary tensions and frustrations.

The present level of moral laxity and turpitude in the relationship between female students and university lecturers was decried and condemned. The Dialogue did not think it necessary to specify moral standards for University lecturers in their relationships in society at large. But, when it comes to sexual relationship with female students, there was an agreement that this is wrong. Lecturers must respect their position of being in loco parentis to students under them. The fact that some female students actively entice them is no excuse for them to commit improprieties. It was also agreed that it was morally wrong for other

adults outside the universities to continue to use their relative affluence to corrupt the youths and have the temerity to condemn lecturers for the same lapses.

While the Dialogue took cognizance of the fact that student unrest was not unique to Nigeria, it observed that the two most important groups that have been able to take government to task for political grievances over the years have been students and organized labour. Some of the times Nigerian students have been more concerned with issues that affect the larger society.

The Dialogue therefore noted that students unrest can be categorized into two: those caused by the students themselves, and those caused by the authorities. In both instances lack of effective communication between the authorities and the students is regarded as the principal cause. Moreover, whatever the cause of any student unrest, there are always staff sympathisers and their role in fuelling the crisis can be critical.

The Dialogue consequently emphasizes the need for the authorities of tertiary institutions to seek a closer understanding of the psychology of students who want to be treated as responsible adults. In most cases it is when they are not so treated that trouble erupts. The lack of that extra little bit of concern by those who administer students affairs can be all that is needed to provoke a demonstration. It was suggested that regular and constant dialogue and discussions need to be held with student leaders to gain their confidence. The minutes of such meetings should be recorded for future reference. Fora such as the Committee of Vice-Chancellors should be used by the university managements to compare notes as to which strategies have proved most efficacious in dealing with students' problems and student unrest. Post-mortem analysis after such unrest by students could

prove extremely rewarding in indicating what to avoid when future crisis are building up.

V. YOUTH AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

It is becoming imperative to enunciate the broad direction and guiding philosophy of Nigerian political process. Youth must shy away from the present pessimism about the system and assume a more positive role within the political process. Youth must also accept as their primary responsibility the need to act as catalyst for improving and changing the system. To do this, they must be cognizant of the fact that youths, as defined earlier, form the largest voting bloc. As such they must seek to overcome their indifference and vote solidly for men and women of character, probity and integrity. Youths cannot afford to play the role of opportunists within the system.

It devolves on the youths to form themselves into groups and engage in the enlightenment of the masses generally about the potency of their voting power. Such an effort must focus more at the grassroots, that is, at the local government levels by participating actively in current attempt at organizing the people into community development associations, not only to engage in their own development but also to serve as effective watchdogs of the political process.

The participants agree that two types of changes are possible, viz fundamental change and reformist change. While acknowledging the overaching potency of the forces youth will always confront, the Dialogue stressed that youth can succeed in reforming the social system only by refusing to be conformists. The present Transition

Programme of government might not meet their aspirations. They can choose to impact on the process by presenting alternative plans of action specifically by refusing to be co-opted into the corrupt practices of the system.

The uphill nature of the task demands that the youth must see themselves as people called upon to propel the society towards a new horizon. Their ability effectively manage public resources and develop a sense of responsibility is attested to by the number of military governors and elder heads of state in the historical experience of Nigeria who fall within the age bracket defined as youths. There is thus a strong need for youths to move away from complaining and talking about the decadence and paralysis of the system to adopting the stance of practical doers who want to effect a change of orientation and attitude towards and within the political process.

VI. VALUES AND SYSTEM

Given the idealism usually attributed to and associated with their age range, the Dialogue observed that more and more youths are becoming tools of religious demagogues who are turning them into fanatics. Worthy of note in particular is the rate at which university campuses are fast becoming breeding grounds of religious crises. Consequently, there is a strong need to inculcate in Nigerian youths the values of religious and social tolerance. Youths must be made to realize that religion is a private and personal way of life, a means of organizing one's life to make it more meaningful and purposeful directed towards the attainment of higher goals within the community.

The Dialogue then called on religious preachers to mellow down their language when preaching and to desist from denouncing other religions. Conversion to one's religious belief should be seen as a question of persuasion based on the acceptance of a superior logic and not as a zero-sum game, in which the gain of one religion is necessarily the loss of the other.

In a similar vein, the Dialogue agreed that there is need to reinforce, reiterate and re-emphasize the secular nature of the Nigerian state at all times. As such, participants suggest that government should distance itself from everything that smack of religious partisanship. It was suggested, for instance, that government should stop henceforth the subsidy to pilgrimages of the two religions since it does not do anything similar for traditionalists and agnostics. Pointing to the experience of Lebanon, the participants reemphasized that religious war is a war Nigeria might not survive. It should be avoided at all costs.

Nonetheless, it was agreed that at this stage of our national development Nigeria cannot afford to be a non-religious country. The virtues preached by all religions have a common strand and as such should be used to effect a re-orientation in the thinking of the youth. By stressing the virtues of honesty, hard work, integrity, service, and moral uprightness as the keystones of civilized existence, all religions can provide valuable support to national development effort.

VII. YOUTH AND THE WORK PROCESS

In view of their abundant energy, the youths, the Dialogue recognizes, are better placed than older people to impact more meaningfully on the work process. To achieve support impact, however, their exposure to the work process must begin quite early in their lives. To help the youths realize the best in them, there is a strong need to bring up children in Nigeria in such a way that they will be exposed to task of ordinary life. The idea of sheltering youths from the harsh realities of life only to expose them later in life to this same conditions can be counter-productive.

Modernization and urbanization are seen as responsible for the fractionalization and polarization presently pervading the orientation of our youths to work in a way not open to youths in traditional society. The situation is not likely to be improved by the new 6-3-3-4 system of education which seeks to divide young people quite early in life to those destined for manual and those for mental work. The Dialogue was unequivocal in stressing that no youth should be spared physical work and all levels of our educational system must strive to inculcate in them a strong appreciation of the dignity of labour.

To this end, it was suggested that all educational institutions should devise programmes, that will compel students to spend at least two hours daily farming on their school or college farms. This will change the orientation of the youth towards physical work and the work process in general, as well as solving part of the students' food problems.

However, it was agreed that since youths are part of the labour force, a discussion of youth and productivity is better left till a later Dialogue that is designed to deal with the issue of labour and productivity.

VIII. YOUTH AND CREATIVITY

The Dialogue observed that creativity is a function of the state of mind. A tensed youth is not likely to be very creative in terms of exploiting opportunities, being imaginative or being resourceful and adventurous. Consequently the participants recommended that youths be provided with ample facilities for recreation that will enhance their mental capability and capacities and release creative energies that have been dammed back for so long.

It was, however, recognized that, for this to happen, considerable resources would need to be allocated towards the provision of facilities necessary to create the appropriate climate to enable the youths undertake deep reflections. While government has a strong part to play in this regard it was agreed that this facilities be rooted more in the community such that the latter can exert strong pressure on government to ensure continuity of resource allocation for running the facilities not as government property, but as the property of the community. This will also enable the community take a more positive and concerned attitude towards the maintenance of such facilities.

The existence of such facilities in every community should take most youths off the

road and guarantee them places where they can usefully interact, relax and cool off when they do feel frustrated, alienated and agitated. It will also assure them of a place where in case of crisis they can meet to discuss and argue out approaches to a situation instead of engaging in futile and confrontational demonstrations. More importantly, such facilities by providing a forum for continuous and varied interaction among youths can become the seed-bed for the flowering of their creative talents.

Nonetheless, participants took cognizance of the fact that the creativity of an individual is a function of his background. They also agreed that the strongest incentive to creativity is the recognition given by the society at large and the rewards of the creativity itself. As such it was suggested that an institution be set up to collate and exhibit the products of the creative efforts and inventions of youths so as to further encourage them to strive for greater achievements.

IX. YOUTH AND LEADERSHIP

On the issue of what concept of leadership is prevalent among Nigerian youths, it was suggested that given the diversity of situations in the country it was necessary first to distinguish between leadership and rulership. Leadership was conceptualized as implying a shared direction between the leaders and the led while rulership is seen as an unidirectional flow of authority from the ruler to the governed. Participants agreed that every society gets the sort of leadership it deserves. Since the youths are products of a society that is

largely corrupts they are bound to be influenced by the corrupt practices of their elders. Corrupt practices have therefore permeated the leadership of most youth organizations particularly students unions of tertiary institutions.

To have a moral standpoint in their presentation of alternative forms of leadership, Youths must, therefore, resolve to rise above the prevailing corrupt practices and, where they offer themselves for leadership position, they must be prepared to lead an exemplary life even though the negative circumstances around them may be overwhelming. Only in this way can youths begin the task of reform to give Nigeria true leadership in the future. The courage to stand up for justice, honesty and truth is a critical trait for a leader. More than this, youths cannot afford to defer everything to the appointed leadership. Astute and vigilant followership is needed to ensure that the ideals of leadership are not inverted and that the goals which both the leadership and followership are pursuing are kept constant on the horizon. Youths in their various organizations must therefore be ready at all times to bring to book corrupt leaders amongst their peers and be vigilant in defence of moral integrity.

On the question of how far youths assess the eligibility of individuals who put themselves forward as their leaders, it was recognized that, whilst still students, most youths are impressionable and cannot easily decipher the real motives of many of their colleagues seeking power. However, participants noted that most leadership aspirants can be categorized into two groups: individualists and collectivists.

The individualist aspirants are those who more often than not seek power for personal selfish ends and are easily prone to become corrupt. Such aspirants tend to be most vocal in chastising and

accusing incumbents leadership and authority of various misdeeds, often relying on deliberately misinforming their followers. Upon assumption of office, such a leader quickly isolates himself from its constituency and shrouds his actions from the knowledge of the electors.

The collectivist aspirant, on the other hand, tends to move more within his constituency. Rather than alienating and isolating himself from his constituency, he establishes a close rapport with them through constant dialogue. As such, collectivist aspirants are less likely to be corrupt and unresponsive to popular demands.

X. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Dialogue noted that what the present generation wants are no different to the desires and yearnings of older generation. The only difference is the changed circumstances in which these desires and aspirations are set. For example, the older generation was brought up in a family situation of scarcity occasioned by the presence of many children clamoring for limited resources. Although one child might not have enough, the generality of the situation makes them usually satisfied. For the present generation within the affluent families, the child is more often than not loaded with more than he requires. As a result, he never learns how to properly manage the resources and tends to fritter them away. This, it was noted, does not encourage resourcefulness on the part of such modern child. Where scarcity exists, the pull and milieu of the society had changed.

At any rate, what the present situation in the country calls for is a greater appreciation that each generation has its own role to play in the progress of society. Youths with ideas have the duty of seeking out their uncles, fathers or relations who are either politicians, bureaucrats, military men or policy makers and engaging them in dialogues to impress them with their own points of view. This need not involve recriminations and accusations but should be a conscientious attempt at mutual understanding. The process might be long and tedious; the result might be painfully slow; but the tenacity of purpose with which individual youths pursue this objective will eventually determine how useful it proves. It is only those who endure to the last that will gain the understanding and wisdom that are the prerequisites for successful leadership of their generation and the necessary development of the country.

ANNEXURE I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former Head of State of Nigeria.

2. Chief Osita Okeke, National President, University of Ibadan Alumni Association.

3. Prof. Akin Mabogunje, Pro-chancellor, Ogun State University and Council Chairman.

4. Mr. Tubasen J. Danji, Farm Manager, NYSC, Farm Project Office, Biu, Borno State.

5. Dr. Yaya Olaniran, Agricultural Consultant.

6. Dr. Femi Badejo, Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science, University of Lagos.

7. Mr. Abubakar Momoh, Asst. Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Lagos State University.

8. Mr. Danladi Bako, Asst. Chief Producer, National Production, NTA.

9. Ibi Sofekun, National Executive Vice President, Nigerian Jaycees.

10. Mr. Adeola Johnson, Mechanical Engineer, NNPC, Warri.

11. Dr. Ebun Sonaiya, Managing Director, Avenue Investments Limited, Lagos.

12. Mr. Bode Ojomu, President, Students Union, University of Ibadan.

13. Mr. Tokunbo Ololade, Senior Accountant, I' Hotel Eko Meriden, Lagos.

14. Professor Wande Abimbola, Vice Chancellor, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

15. Revd. Olubanjo Oshewa, National Secretary, Anglican Youth Fellowship, Nigeria.

16. Mr. Victor Ogundipe, General Manager, Commerce Bank Limited.

17. Dr. Iyabo Obasanjo, Veterinary Doctor and Youth Corper.

18. Mr. Ayodele Aderinwale, Africa Leadership Forum.

19. Alhaji (Chief) Ganiyu Kola Balogun, Labour Consultant.

BACKGROUND NOTE ON THE AFRICA LEADERSHIP FORUM

Despite over a quarter of a century of political independence, Africa's aspirations and hopes remain today largely unfulfilled. This has not been, however, a period of unmitigated failure in the history of the continent; there have been successes in education, public health, import substitution industries, and in the continuing process of decolonization. The problems of development, peace and security, the health of the world economy, and improving the environment are interrelated global issues; they do not admit of piecemeal solutions.

And yet all countries find that in the absence of true global cooperation, they have to tackle particular aspects of them. At the national level in Africa, the inadequacy of information, data, and resources render the problems daunting. Regionally they are overwhelming.

African leaders have frequently come to their positions with limited experience. Though most of them have battled on, confronting their awesome problems of development and nation-building essentially not only unprepared but unaided, their efforts have been at best only a qualified success.

Africa cannot afford to continue with ill-prepared and unassisted leaders. Those on whom the burden of leadership will fall in future must fully comprehend their responsibilities, duties, and obligations. They must, that is, have exposure and carefully planned preparation if they are to meet the challenges that will face them.

The leaders of tomorrow, however, today have to be pursuing their professional careers. They

have little time to devote to gaining a comprehensive knowledge of their own countries and their region, nor of the cultures of their diverse peoples. Nor even to learning about and understanding the actions taken by their present leaders where they do not impinge on their own areas of expertise.

Most young potential leaders have focused primarily on single issues, lacking time to look at wider, critical regional and world challenges. Time for comprehensive study and reflection, for sharing experiences with persons inside, let alone outside, their countries, region, and field of concentration is very limited. Opportunities for such detached discussion and contemplation are even rarer.

There are no private institutions in Africa devoted to preparing potential leaders with a global outlook, leaders who will be able to cooperate within and across national, regional, and institutional boundaries. Further, it is difficult, if not impossible, in many African countries to gain access to relevant and timely information on most national, regional, and global issues.

Experience in and out of Government and in international fora bears out this situation, one which poses a challenge to address and remedy. One solution is to hold periodically the "Africa Leadership Forum" - a series which may be national, subregional, regional and international in dimension and may very in duration. The purpose will be to enhance the knowledge and awareness of young, potential African leaders, placing special emphasis on diagnosing apparent failures of the past; on understanding multiple dimensions and complex interrelations of local, national, regional, and global problems; and on seeking possible approaches to solutions.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Forum is to encourage diagnosis, understanding, and an informed search for solutions to local, regional and global problems, taking full account of their interrelationships and mutual consequences.

To that end, the Forum will develop, organize and support programmes for the training of young and promising Africans with leadership potential so as to expose them to the demands, duties and obligations of leadership positions and to prepare them systematically for assuming hither responsibilities and meeting the challenges of an interdependent world.

The Forum will also endeavour to generate greater understanding and enhance the knowledge and awareness of development and social problems within a global context among young, potential leaders from all sectors of society, cutting across national, regional, continental, professional and institutional borders. This may foster close and enduring relationships among participants, relationships promoting life-long association and cooperation.

Further, the Forum will support and encourage the diagnosis and informed search for appropriate and effective solutions to local and regional African problems and to global problems from an African perspective - within the framework of global interdependence -, including consideration of phased action programmes that can be initiated by various countries, sub-regions and institutions.

In addition, there will be specific weekend seminars organized as Farm House Dialogues to be held quarterly. The first of the Dialogues entitled "Leadership for Development" was held on 13 - 14 May 1988.

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